

HOW THE WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE CAN HELP YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WRL's Youth & Counter-Militarism Program provides youth with the resources and training necessary to agitate against military recruitment in their schools and communities. We produce materials, conduct trainings, and work in a number of national coalitions. Check us out at www.warresisters.org/youth. See links for other groups providing military counseling and counter-recruitment information and resources.

WRL's Anti-Militarism Program organizes a Stop the Merchants of Death campaign to raise awareness and develop grassroots campaigns to stop war profiteers corporations that sell war and then profit from the bloodshed.

Check the War Resisters League website for other resources, including a new page on war and gender oppression, feminism and nonviolence.



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BATTERED by the PENTAGON



Facts about the reality of
military service for women.
Strategies for resisting violence
against women by the U.S. military.

Thinking of joining the military? Consider these statistics:

- "In a 2003 study, nearly one out of three women veterans said they had been sexually assaulted while on active duty." (*American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, March 2003)

- "An astonishing 60% of women reservists and National Guard members report being sexually assaulted or harassed during their service." (*Depart. of Veterans Affairs Study due March 2001, released September 2005*)

- The atmosphere in the military encourages rape, murder, and other kinds of violence against civilian women, women who live with men in uniform, and women who are enlisted in every branch of the Armed Forces. Violence against women is not only an accepted part of military culture but an integral component in the training that desensitizes soldiers to violence and killing.

Look inside to find out exactly why and how the atmosphere in the military threatens all women with being "Battered by the Pentagon."



If you think the military is an option, before enlisting...

- Ask veterans about their experiences of the military culture.
- Ask yourself whether you want to be part of a system that causes physical, emotional and psychological trauma to both women and men.

- Recognize that military recruiters are under pressure to meet their quota of new recruits.

Get involved in efforts to stop the assaults on women!

- Educate yourself and others about how militarism dehumanizes women worldwide, both in the military and in civilian life.
- Distribute this flyer to friends and family, teachers, health centers and work places.
- Demand your local high schools and colleges allow counter-recruitment materials including information about how militarism especially hurts women.

RESOURCES:

GI Rights Hotline: 1-800-394-9544

For information on the Delayed Entry Program, conscientious objection, and legal information for GIs.

The Miles Foundation provides comprehensive services to victims of violence associated with the military and information resources.
<http://hometown.aol.com/milesfdn/myhomepage/> or 203-270-7861.

STAAAMP (Survivors Take Action Against Abuse by Military Personnel)

Phone Reverend Dorothy Mackey at 602-374-7375. Provides legal information and support for people in the military who have been victimized by sexual assault or harassment and presentations and workshops on the subject.

Diane Greene Lent

MILITARY CULTURE rapes and harasses GIs:

- Reports of sexual assaults in the military increased by nearly 40 percent last year, the Pentagon announced Thursday. According to the report, there were 2,374 allegations of sexual assaults reported during 2005, compared to 1,700 in 2004. Of last year's reports, 435 were initially filed under a new program that allows victims to report the incident and receive health care or counseling services but does not notify law enforcement or commanders. (Baltimore Sun, March 17, 2006)

- "It was widely known that female cadets would be punished if they reported a sexual assault." (Interview with an Air Force Cadet, ABC News, Denver, February, 2003)

- In 2003 and 2004, 147 sexual assaults were reported in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and other active-deployment areas, according to Pentagon figures. But the numbers represent only a small fraction of attacks. A study by the Department of Veterans Affairs shows that 75 percent of assaulted military women never tell their commanding officer. ("Vet becomes crusader for victims of soldier rape," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, April 11, 2005)

- After a four-month study of 85 installations in the United States and overseas, Air Force teams reported that many rapes had not been reported because victims feared that they would be disciplined and that response programs for victims were inadequate. (The New York Times, Sept. 1, 2004)

- Col. Janis Karpinski testified that several female soldiers had died in Iraq of dehydration because they refused to drink liquids late in the day. They were afraid of being assaulted or even raped by male soldiers if they had to use the women's latrine after dark. She also testified to the Military Command's attempts at a coverup. (Truthout Report, Jan. 30, 2006)

MILITARY CULTURE uses rape as a weapon:

- The United Nations estimates 5,000 women in one region of the Congo were raped in five months alone, averaging 40 rapes a day in 2003. ("DRC, Mass Rape-Time for Remedies," Amnesty International, Oct. 26, 2004)

- According to the official report on the Abu Ghraib prison abuse, when detainees are sexually abused or sodomized, the military police do not consider it rape. Sexual abuse of men is also used as a tool of war. (The Taguba Report on Treatment of Abu Ghraib Prisoners in Iraq, May, 2004)

- "Soldiers occupying conquered territory are removed from the moderating influence of their communities and families. At the same time, they are surrounded by a civilian population which is seen as the enemy or as inferior. Not only are soldiers given license to ignore the normal boundaries to acceptable behaviour, but the contempt in which the "enemy" is held can find expression – when directed against women – in rape. Women are seen as embodying enemy culture, so that when destruction of the enemy culture is a military goal, violence against women is legitimized." ("Casualties of war: women's bodies, women's lives," Amnesty International, December, 2004)

MILITARY CULTURE... ...causes domestic violence:

- There have been 218 domestic murders in the U.S. military since 1995. (Lucinda Marshall, Z Magazine, April 2004)

- A study by the North Carolina Advocacy Institute shows children in jurisdictions with military bases are twice as likely to be killed by a parent or a caregiver than other children in the state. (15-year study by the North Carolina Child Advocacy Institute, released in May 2005)

- The wife of an Iraq war veteran said the advice she got from the psychiatric unit of the local Veterans Administration was, "Don't call us unless your husband is waking you up in the middle of the night with a knife at your throat." Or "Don't call us unless he actually chokes you, unless you pass out. He'll have flashbacks." ("The Price of Valor," Dan Baum, The New Yorker, July 12 & 19, 2004)

- "I just killed my wife." -Veteran, after one year in Iraq, in a call to his father. His wife had gotten a restraining order earlier in the month. (Associated Press, April 23, 2004)

MILITARY CULTURE scars women psychologically:

Women may be at higher risk of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from the trauma of combat including sexual assault in the military, since "women in the military are more likely to experience some form of sexual trauma." ("Sexual trauma now a bigger issue in military," Victoria Advocate, April 25, 2005)



Katherine Jashinski, a member of the U.S. National Guard and a Conscientious Objector candidate, makes a statement on her decision to seek CO status at Ft. Benning, Nov. 17, 2005. To her right is Aimee Allison, a CO during the First Gulf War.

MILITARY CULTURE hates women:

- "In Basic, the drill instructors' basic method was to abuse us and break us down. They'd 'shark attack' us. Shark attacks are when four drill sergeants surround one of us, swearing and yelling and spitting, each with their faces inches away. They'd yell, 'You're a girl. You're a wimp. You're a pussy.' " (Tyler Gilbert, "Basic Training: Basic Cruelty, Basic Misogyny," Peacework, February 2005)

- "Armed forces encourage male bonding and expressions of virility so that soldiers trust each other and resist any display of weakness in front of their peers, which is derided as 'feminine.' Male aggression towards women is often tacitly tolerated, or even encouraged, as raw recruits are turned into hardened 'warriors' through a brutalizing training regime." ("Casualties of war: women's bodies, women's lives," Amnesty International, December, 2004)

- "One of the horrible things I discovered after the Gulf War was that, because of the coeducation of wars, as it were, male soldiers were given extensive desensitization training to make them able to hear women being raped and tortured in the next room without breaking." (Dr. Leon Kass, chair of the President's Council on Bioethics, The Village Voice, January 2003)